Might Could English Be 'Double-Dutch' Too?: Doubling and The Syntactic Atlas of British Isles' Dialects

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◻ Abstract

As noted in Beal (2004), both Wakelin (1983) and Trudgill (1999) classify British Isles' vernaculars entirely according to phonological/phonetic criteria, whilst Ellis (1889) includes only one feature that might be considered morphological. Indeed, there has historically not been any systematic collection of dialectal morphosyntactic data for the entire British Isles, given the largely phonetic and lexical orientation of previous dialect atlases. There are, of course, some important twentieth century surveys of particular locations that document and analyse morphosyntactic variation and change (including 'syntactic doubling' phenomena (Barbiers 2005)) in both urban and rural communities across the region (see Anderwald 2002, Corrigan 1997, Henry 1957, McDonald 1981, Pietsch 2005 and Shorrocks 1998, for instance). However, many of these remain in unpublished form and, because they were originally conceived as doctoral dissertations, they are rather narrow in focus. *The Syntactic Atlas of British Isles' Dialects* (SABID) project will, therefore, be an initial step towards the systematic investigation of such syntactic differences across the entire region using large-scale vernacular corpora that are collected in a systematic fashion with due regard for potential social (age/gender) and spatial (rural/urban) differences between speakers.

This paper aims to review the following issues relevant to the creation of SABID, in general, and syntactic doubling phenomena within vernacular British Englishes, in particular:

1. The history of such phenomena in English and the ideologies behind the exclusion of them in the British Standard.
2. Evidence from previous research for syntactic doubling in British Isles' Englishes.
3. The problematical nature of previous atlas-type surveys in the British Isles with respect to the collection of morphosyntactic data.
4. Testing effective instruments for systematically and sensitively uncovering the dynamics of morphosyntactic variation in different dialect areas of the British Isles.

1 ◻ Introduction

This paper explores syntactic doubling in vernacular Englishes spoken in the British Isles[1] taking a more microscopic view of the phenomena than the macroscopic picture painted by Kortmann & Schneider *et al.* (2004) and Kortmann & Szmerecsanyi (2006). The focus is to be on microvariation in the system of double modals in these regions, though wider questions will also be addressed. In particular, there will be a review of previous large-scale Linguistic Atlases of the British Isles that assesses their usefulness in detecting syntactic doubling phenomena. It will be argued that their lexical and phonological orientation makes them problematic in this regard and the paper will conclude by proposing that there is an urgent need for a *Syntactic Atlas of the British Isles* along the lines of the *Syntactic Atlas of the Dutch*

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[1] The region in question is defined as the territories of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Dialects (SAND) (see Barbiers *et al.* in press*)* and the other new European Atlases already begun in Austria, Germany, Italy and Scandinavia (see http://www.meertens.knaw.nl/projecten/edisyn/dialectsyntaxarchive/)

2 ▣ The history and contemporary dynamics of syntactic doubling phenomena in English

This section of the paper addresses three key issues with respect to the history and contemporary dynamics of syntactic doubling phenomena in vernacular Englishes, namely:-

1. The history of syntactic doubling in British Isles' Englishes and the ideologies behind the exclusion of such constructions in the Modern Standard varieties spoken in these regions (see Bex and Watts 1999 and Kallen and Kirk (in press)).

2. What kinds of syntactic doubling can be found in contemporary English vernaculars, which, for various reasons, have been relatively immune from convergence towards the Standard (see Auer *et al.* 2005)?

3. How reliable is the evidence for comparative analyses of these phenomena across social and regional space, given the kinds of observational and acceptability judgement data currently available for analysis?

2.1 ▣ The history of syntactic doubling in English

Considering the geographical spread of syntactic doubling phenomena in contemporary Germanic languages (see Bayer 1990 and Barbiers 2005 *inter alia)*, one might expect English to also show such characteristics in its syntax. However, authoritative grammars of Modern Standard English, such as Quirk *et al.* (1972:379), explicitly preclude the possibility that negative forms, for example, can be doubled (see §7.47, note b). By contrast, similar works devoted to earlier phases of English, like Mitchell (1985), demonstrate that these phenomena actually have a long history in English and occur in a wide variety of forms. Unsurprisingly then, syntactic doubles have featured strongly in generative accounts of Old English (OE) syntax. Thus, in accordance with the analysis of V2 in early generative treatments of Germanic, van Kemenade (1987) posits that the C° position in OE contained a lexicalization of an AGR element that forced movement of the V°-I° complex to this position. Moreover, she argues that the 'doubly-filled COMP filter' (formally stated in (1) below), which Chomsky (1981:234) has advocated for Modern Standard English, is not operative in OE grammars. This is because there appear to be circumstances in which COMP may have two lexicalized positions as in the subordinate structure in (2) leading van Kemenade to conclude that all COMPs are double but (as (3)) illustrates) both 'α' and 'β' need not be phonologically realized.

(1)   *[COMP α β]

                                                                    α   β

(2)   Ure Drihten arærde   anes ealdormannes dohtor, **seo ›e**   læg dead.
        Our Lord RAISE-PAST *an alderman's daughter, who that   lay dead*
        'Our Lord brought to life an alderman's daughter who lay dead'

                                                           [*AHP*, VI, 176 in van Kemenade (1987:224)]

				ι.	α	β	

(3) fia   befran   se halgan wer, **Ø on hwæs gesthuse** hi   metes onbirigdon?
     Then ASK-PAST *the holy man   in whose   hostel   they food   tasted*
     'Then the holy man asked in whose hostel they had tasted food'

<div align="right">[AHTh, II, 168 in van Kemenade (1987:224)]</div>

Other examples of such doubling phenomena - in this case multiple negation - are illustrated from historical documents drawn from various regions of the British Isles in examples (4-7b). These highlight: (i) the geographical spread of the phenomenon in earlier English (in Ireland (7a/b), Scotland (6a) and Northern and Southern England (4, 5a/b, 6b) as well as its occurrence in Old and Middle English (4, 5a/b, 7a) and (ii) its persistence into what are usually termed the Early and Later Modern periods of English (6a, 6b, 7b).[2]

(4)   &   hiera   **naenig**   hit ge›icgean   **nolde**.
       and   them [GEN.PL.] none [NOM.SG.] it   accept   not-wished
       'and none of them would accept it.'

<div align="right">[890-970 Southern English Parker Chronicle: cited in Denison (1993: 449)]</div>

(5)a **Nere none** better in **no** contreye.
      '[There was] never anyone better in any country.'

<div align="right">[14c. London English Kyng Alisaunder: cited in Iyeiri (2001: 128)]</div>

(5)b hade he **no** helme **ne** hawbergh **nau›er/...ne no** schafte **ne no** schelde.
      'he had no helmet nor any chain mail shirt either/ nor any spear or shield.'

<div align="right">[14c. N.W.Mid. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: cited in Iyeiri (2001: 128)]</div>

(6)a **Nor never** lowt the thoughts of it entr in may mind.
      'Nor ever let the thoughts of it enter my head.'

<div align="right">[17c. Scots: cited in Cusack (1998: 220)]</div>

(6)b that **no** woman has **nor never none** shall mistress be of it.
      'no woman has that [his heart] and no-one will ever be mistress of it.'

<div align="right">[17c. Southern English Twelfth Night: cited in Beal (2006: 71)]</div>

(7)a Ther **nis** halle, bure **no** benche.
      'There isn't any hall, bureau or bench.'

<div align="right">[14c. Irish-English Kildare Poems: http://www.ucc.ie/celt/]</div>

(7)   b   Mrs Inis will **never** send me of **no** more Arrands.
      'Mrs Inis will never send me on any more errands.'

<div align="right">[18c. Irish-English: cited in Bliss (1979: 153)]</div>

The emergence of the 'Doctrine of Correctness' (Leonard 1929) between 1700 and 1800 resulted in the proliferation of prescriptive grammars and ideas with respect to the codification of English. Although there isn't space in this paper to demonstrate in any detail the importance of this standardizing movement to the demise of syntactic doubling phenomena in the written Standard, the evidence is clear from Ann Fisher's statement that:

> A Negative in *English,* cannot be expressed by two Negatives; as *it was not*
> *good for Nothing; I cannot eat none,* &c. Such Expressions are Solecisms,
> which, instead of Negatives, make Affirmatives and signify as much; as *It*
> *was good for something; I can eat some.*
> [Fisher (1754:120), cited in Beal (2004:114)]

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[2] Namely, between 1500 and 1700 onwards as defined by Beal (2004a) [note 2004 b somewhere].

As indicated by the important outcomes of the recent *Handbook of Varieties of English* (Kortmann & Schneider *et al.* 2004) and *The World Atlas* (Haspelmath *et al.* 2005), the patterning of syntactic doubling in English and cross-linguistically is not identical across regional space. In the case of world Englishes, this is likely to be due - amongst other factors - to the differential rates of historical change in dialects across time. Some vernaculars will have succumbed to convergence towards the Standard with respect to this phenomenon more rapidly than others, as recently argued in Cornips and Corrigan (2005a).

2.2 ▣ THE DISTRIBUTION OF SYNTACTIC DOUBLING IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERNACULARS.

This section begins with an overview of the kinds of historical doubling phenomena that remain in divergent dialects of English. It then concludes with a discussion of the dynamics of one such construction, namely double modals, examining the internal and external constraints that seem to operate in those vernacular Englishes in which this phenomenon is still attested.

2.2.1 ▣ SYNTACTIC DOUBLING IN BRITISH ISLES' ENGLISHES

As examples (8-30) illustrate, at least 5 major categories of syntactic doubling can be isolated from observational and acceptability judgement data drawn from users of non-standard English varieties within diverse regions of the British Isles, i.e. (A) Multiple Negatives, (B) Resumptive Pronouns, (C) Double Conjunctions, (D) Verb Doubles and (E) Double Modals.

A ▫ MULTIPLE NEGATIVES

(8) I like to see them but I'm **no** one for that **neither**.
'I like to see them but I'm not one for that either.'
[SCOTS corpus: http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/corpus/]

(9) I **divvent** know **nowt** else you know.
'I don't know anything else you know.'
[Tyneside English: *NECTE Corpus* cited in Beal & Corrigan (2005: 147)]

(10) I'm **not never** going to do **nowt no** more for thee.
'I'm not ever going to do anything more for you.'
[Bolton English: cited in Shorrocks (1999: 193)]

(11) He could**n't** find **none no**where.
'He couldn't find any anywhere.'
[Southern British English: cited in Edwards (1993: 226)]

(12) I **never** saw **nothing.**
'I didn't see anything.'
[Northern Irish-English: cited in Henry (1997: 103)]

(13) The corporation **don't** give **no** loans.
'[Dublin] corporation don't give any loans.'
[Southern Irish-English: http://www.uni-essen.de/IERC/]

B ▫ RESUMPTIVE/SHADOW PRONOUNS

(14) *The spikes* [**that** you stick in the ground and throw rings over **them**].
'The spikes that you stick in the ground <u>which</u> you throw rings over.'
[Scottish English: cited in Miller (1993: 111-112)]

(15) The *old lady* [**her** as had it] were busy dishing them out.
'The old lady <u>who</u> owned the pea-stall was busy serving peas.'

(16)   We had *one student* [**who he** couldn't write].
   'We had one student <u>who</u> couldn't write.'
<div align="right">[Cornwall English: cited in Trudgill <i>et al.</i> (1982: 36)]</div>

(17)   I thought they would have put *a steel door* on [**that** they couldn't have opened it].
   'I thought they would have put a steel door on <u>which</u> they couldn't have opened.'
<div align="right">[Northern Irish-English: cited in Policansky (1982:45)]</div>

(18)   That's *the chap* [**that his** uncle was drowned].
   'That's the chap <u>whose</u> uncle was drowned.'
<div align="right">[Northern Counties of <i>SED</i>: cited in Orton <i>et al.</i> (1962-1971: 1085)]</div>

(19)   They jumped *banks* that time on the race-course [that they wouldn't ever hunt over **them** today].
    'They jumped banks back then on the race-course <u>which</u> they wouldn't ever hunt over today.'
<div align="right">[Southern Irish-English: cited in Filppula (1999: 186)]</div>

C □ DOUBLE CONJUNCTIONS

(20)   **Suppose if** ye've a big name, eh, ye want to be with a big...
   'If you have an important name, eh, you want to be with important...'
<div align="right">[SCOTS corpus: http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/corpus/]</div>

(21)   We're going **except if** it's raining.
   'We're going unless it's raining.'
<div align="right">[Bolton English: cited in Shorrocks (1999: 98)]</div>

D □ VERB DOUBLING

(22)   I just, I **do spick** normally.
   'I just, I speak normally.'
<div align="right">[SCOTS corpus: <u>http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/corpus/</u>]</div>

(23)   We **did come** back then and we **did have** a glass or two of cider...
   'We came back then and we had a glass or two of cider...'
<div align="right">[East Somerset English: cited in Ihalainen (1991: 154)]</div>

(24)   I **did hear** that Blessed Oliver Plunkett and Redmond O'Hanlon sheltered in it.
   'I heard that Blessed Oliver Plunkett and Redmond O'Hanlon sheltered in it.'
<div align="right">[South Armagh English: cited in Corrigan (1997: A11)]</div>

(25)   You can see in the old stone wall the fresh knocking where they **did bring** in the horse.
   'You can see in the old stone wall the fresh knocking where they brought in the horse.'
<div align="right">[Southern Irish-English: cited in Filppula (1999: 134)]</div>

(26) a And err, when I **do be listenin'** to the Irish here, I **do be** sorry now, when you're in a local having a drink, nobody seems to understand it.
   'And err, when I listen [+habitual aspect] to the Irish here, I am [+habitual aspect] sorry now, when you're in a pub having a drink, nobody seems to understand it.'
<div align="right">[Southern Irish-English: cited in Filppula (1999: 134)]</div>

(26)b A lot of them **does cut** them on into June.
   'A lot of them cut [+habitual aspect] them on into June.'
<div align="right">[Northern Irish-English: cited in Harris (1993: 163)]</div>

(26)c Them cows **do graze** in the fields.
        'Those cows graze [+habitual aspect] in the fields.'

                                    [South Wales English: cited in Trudgill *et al.* (1982: 29)]

E ▫ DOUBLE MODAL

(27) He **should can** go tomorrow.
        'He ought to be able to go tomorrow.'

                                            [Scottish English: Brown (1991: 74)]

(28) He **wouldn't could have** worked, even if you had asked him.
        'He wouldn't have been able to work even if you had asked him.'

                                    [Tyneside English: cited in McDonald (1981: 186)]

(29) Theaw **must 'ave for t'** be clever for t' go to t' university.
        'You have to be clever in order to go to university.'

                                    [Bolton English: cited in Shorrocks (1999: 193)]

(30) We don't have that, but you **might could** find that across the street.
        'We don't have that, but you might be able to find that across the street.'

                            [Northern Irish-English: cited in Montgomery and Nagle (1993: 103)]

Although some doubling phenomena, like multiple negation (8-13), are apparently very widespread geographically (see Iyeiri 2005) other constructions, such as the persistence of modal verb clusters (27-30), seem to be confined to dialect areas that have adstratal relations with one another (such as Northern Ireland, Northern England and Scotland). Moreover, it is possible that certain doubling phenomena cross-dialectally may look identical on the surface, but may actually have developed from different origins and thus should not, necessarily, be accounted for theoretically in the same manner. A good case in point is the verb doubling which ostensibly looks similar in the Scots, English, Irish-English and Welsh-English data illustrated in (22-26c). It is clear, however, that, contextually, periphrastic *do* in (26a/b/c) is not semantically neutral as in (22-25) but in the former, incorporates habitual aspect. The operation of *do* in such cases may be a reflex of substratum influence from the Celtic languages that have had contact with English in these regions in which the contrast between iterative and non-iterative syntagms is highly prominent. This suggests that verb doubling in (26a/b/c) would need to be analysed quite differently from *do*+main verb structures in (22-25) (see Chalcraft 2006, Cornips and Corrigan 2005a, Corrigan 1997, Filppula 1999 and Kallen 1986).

2.3 ▣ HOW RELIABLE IS THIS EVIDENCE FOR VARIATION AND CHANGE IN SYNTACTIC DOUBLES?

Because syntactic doubling phenomena in contemporary English vernaculars have largely evolved from their wider acceptability in earlier states of the language and have been subsequently reduced in the Standard for ideological reasons, research on other aspects of the morphosyntax of English would lead one to expect there to be microvariation in the usage of doubling phenomena across those vernaculars which retain them in social and regional space as well as language-internally (see Cornips and Corrigan 2005a). To give you an idea of what we might expect in this regard, let's take a look at the internal and external constraints that have been demonstrated in recent research by Tagliamonte & Smith (in press) to apply to an aspect of the system of modality in British Isles' varieties. Forms used to express deontic modality in Standard British English have been subject to interesting variability, with *must* losing ground to both *have to* and *have got to* over time. Non-standard vernaculars are at various

points along this continuum and while *must* is obsolescent amongst most of these, there has been an unanticipated resurgence of *have to* alongside pan-dialectal grammatical re-organization: (1) *have to* is being used in contexts traditionally encoded by *must* and (2) *have got to* is specializing for indefinite reference. The results of a variable rule analysis[3] by Tagliamonte and Smith (in press) on British and Northern Irish vernaculars with respect to deontic modality is presented in Table 1. They support this hypothesis:-

Table 1: Variable rule analysis of the contribution of factors to the probability of *must, have to, have got to* for deontic modality *must, have to, have got to*.

VARIABLE	Must		Have		Have Got To		Ns/cell
Corrected Mean	0.5		0.51		0.33		
Overall proportion	10%		44.7%		35.9%		
COMMUNITY	%	FW	%	FW	%	FW	
TIV	4	.40	12	**.14**	35	**.42**	65
HEN	15	.61	48	**.42**	40	**.61**	81
MPT	8	.44	49	**.45**	44	**.62**	108
YRK	22	.65	54	**.49**	35	**.59**	78
WHL	0	-	59	**.63**	41	**.53**	17
CMK	7	.47	48	**.48**	39	**.54**	125
BCK	0	-	80	**.83**	20	**.30**	25
N.I	4	.34	87	**.92**	9	**.11**	54
Range				78		48	
GRAMMATICAL PERSON							
def. 1/3 obj	4	**.42**	66	.65	27	.41	213
def. 1/3 subj	38	.91	38	**.37**	34	**.49**	53
gen. 2 obj	3	**.36**	39	**.37**	45	.30	205
Range		55	28	19			

N.B. factors selected as significant in bold/ red

KEY:

TIV = *Tiverton, S.W. England (rural)*
HEN = *Henfield, S.E. England (rural)*
MPT = *Maryport, N.W. England (rural)*
YRK = *York, N.E. England (urban)*
WHL = *Wheatley Hill, N.E. England (rural)*
CMK = *Cumnock, N.W. Scotland (rural)*
BCK = *Buckie, N.E. Scotland (rural)*
N.I.= *Cullybackey and Portavogie, Northern Ireland (rural)*

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[3] Readers not familiar with this analytical method should note that:
(i) Analyses measure the strength of different factors potentially contributing to variation and there are two in Table 1, namely, 'community' and 'grammatical function';
(ii) Significant factor groups in each case are those where the outcome is above .5.

As can be seen by examining the figures in bold in Table (1), the most significant effect operating on the choice of deontic forms is 'community'. The strength of this factor is high for *have to* with a range of 78 (in red), and *have got to* with a range of 48 (also in red), though it is much less crucial for *must* which was not even recorded for communities in the rural North East of England and Scotland - indicating that it is clearly obsolescing. Moreover, the values for the factor weights for each form reflect distributional preferences across different communities. Since *have to* forms predominate in Buckie and the 2 Northern Irish locations - communities which are, in fact, historically related - high factor weights (in bold) are recorded here. By contrast, higher factor weights for *have got to* (in bold) correlate with the fact that in Henfield, Maryport, York, Wheatley Hill and Cumnock the more innovative *have got to* form is dominating.

So, clearly then, there are regional differences in the British Isles with respect to the trajectory of change which the system of deontic modality is undergoing. What is interesting from our perspective too is that this regional variation is not entirely free but is constrained by internal properties of the language faculty. Thus, if we look at the results for grammatical person/definiteness, despite the widely divergent factor weights for the forms across communities, the VARBRUL analysis selects the contextual constraint of 'grammatical person' as a statistically significant predictor of form irrespective of community location. Furthermore, the hierarchy of factor weights produced by this method uncovers a critical pattern: definite objective contexts favour *have to,* with a factor weight of .65 (red); Second person indefinite contexts favour *have got to,* with a factor weight of .60 (red). And, finally, relic *must* is the main option for the much less frequent definite First and Third person subjective contexts where it is favoured at .91 (red). Thus, as Tagliamonte & Smith (in press) put it:

> Each regional dialect can be distinguished based on its unique distribution of frequencies of forms for deontic modality....there is a significant underlying, pan-dialectal, grammar-internal constraint which guides their selection.

2.3.1 ▣ Internal and external constraints on double modal usage in British Isles' Englishes

While I am not aware of any systematic quantitative cross-dialectal studies on the <u>microvariation</u> of other aspects of modality - particularly the double modals which are of interest to this paper - it is clear from the individual studies of this phenomenon in different varieties of English that there may well also be both external (particularly regional) differences in their usage as well as internal constraints of the kind which Tagliamonte & Smith (in press) have isolated for the system of modality more generally.

A flavour of what is known about variation and change in double modal usage - albeit from a range of studies using rather different data collection methods - is given below:

▣ Although its origins can arguably be traced to earlier stages of English, the feature is more geographically restricted contemporaneously than appears to be the case for the other doubling phenomena found in the British Isles and illustrated in A-D of §2.2.1 above. (see Görlach 2002; Miller & Brown 1982; Montgomery & Nagle 1993; Nagle 1993);

- Currently, it is confined to Scottish varieties and to Northern dialects of English as well as their descendents in colonial contexts such as Northern Ireland and North America. (see Brown 1991; Corrigan 2000; Görlach 2002; Fennell & Butters 1996; Miller & Brown 1982; Mishoe & Montgomery 1992; Montgomery 1989; Montgomery & Nagle 1993);

- Different regional varieties have diverse inventories of possible combinations, as demonstrated in Tables (2a) and (2b) below (after Beal (1991); Beal & McDonald 1987; Brown (1991); Fennell & Butters (1996); McDonald (1981); Mishoe & Montgomery (1992); Montgomery (1989); Montgomery & Nagle (1993)):-

Table 2a: Inventory of Modal Combinations in British Isles' Englishes.

MODAL COMBINATION			
Will can	Will could	Would could	ø
Might can	Might could	Might would	Might should
May can	ø	ø	ø
Could can	ø	ø	ø
Mustn't could	ø	ø	ø

Table 2b: Inventory of Modal Combinations in North American Englishes.

MODAL COMBINATION							
Might can	May can	Could might	Can't never would	Should might better	Better might	Can might	Musta coulda
Might could	May could	Could better would used to	ø	Should ought to	ø	ø	ø
Might would	May would	Could used to	ø	Should have ought to	ø	ø	ø
Might should	May should	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might will	May will	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might ought to	May not ought to	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might better	May shall	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might used to	May used to	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might would've had to	May might	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might should ought to	May might can	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø

Might've used to	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might could have	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø
Might have would have	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø

At the simplest level, the greatest difference between the two tables is the far greater number of combinations attested in North America than in Britain. There is also the fact that *Might could* is common to and frequent in all observed regional varieties that permit serial modality. There are more subtle differences too - of a similar kind to those which Barbiers (2005) has recently reported for dialects of Dutch. For instance, in the British Isles, the order *will can* is most frequent. In North America, by contrast, *might could, might can, used to could* and *might would* are the four combinations most frequently noted in observational and elicitation studies. In all varieties, *can* and *could* are most often the final modal. In North America, the first slot is usually restricted to *might* and *may* while in the British Isles the second slot is even more frequently filled by *can* and *could*. Curiously, the order most often cited for the British Isles is *will can,* though this combination is not at all well-attested for North America.

There are also differences between the two varieties with respect to the ordering of modals in negative and interrogative contexts suggesting perhaps more deep-seated and interesting microvariation between the systems of these two kinds of English. In negative contexts with narrow scope, for example, the markers *not* (and its equivalents *no, nae* in Scottish/Northern English varieties) usually <u>follow</u> the first modal in British Isles varieties (31a), but they can also float towards the main verb (31b) or cliticize to the first modal (32c):

(31) a He might **no** could have done it.
    'He might not have been able to do it.'

                                     [Scots English: cited in Brown (1991:98)]

(31)b He might could **no** have done it.
    'He might not have been able to do it.'

                                       [Scots English: cited in Brown (1991:98)]

(31)c He might**nae** could have done it.
    'He might not have been able to do it.'

                                       [Scots English: cited in Brown (1991:98)]

However, in United States varieties, either the first modal (32a), the second modal (32b), or less frequently, both modals (32c) may be negated. As in (32a), the negative *not* is normally uncontracted after the first modal but it is normally cliticised when it occurs after the second as in 32b/c:

(32) a She might **not** should leave by five.
    'She might not have to leave by five.'
                        [US English: cited in Montgomery & Nagle (1993:97)]

(32)b She might should**'nt** leave by five.
    'She might not have to leave by five.'
                        [US English: cited in Montgomery & Nagle (1993:97)]

(32)c She might **not** should**'nt** leave by five.
    'She might not have to leave by five.'

<div align="right">[US English: cited in Montgomery & Nagle (1993:97)]</div>

2.3.2 ▣ Problems of methods, data and interpretation

I would not want to completely dismiss the rather interesting - and perhaps quite significant differences - that have been sketched here for double modals and which, by extension, could probably also be done for the other doubling phenomena in English that were noted in §2.2.1 above and which Chalcraft (2006), Kortmann & Schneider *et al.* (2004) and Kortmann & Szmerecsanyi (2006) also attest to. Nevertheless, there are a number of problematic issues which the kind of comparative analysis that has been presented in §2.3.1 raise. Most crucially, what has just been reviewed combines the results of data collected via observation (usually of the sociolinguistic interview kind but also as overheard material) and that collected via elicitation - often using techniques that have been demonstrated by the recent research of Cornips & Poletto (2005), for instance, to be flawed in various respects. Given the paucity of doubling data in naturally occurring speech, it is unsurprising that despite the 300K word corpus upon which McDonald's in-depth (1981) study of modality in Tyneside, North Eastern England relies, she too reports having to supplement her data-sets of double modals with attested utterances and elicitation tests (see Beal & McDonald 1987: 45-46). Thus, resorting to investigating a combination of data-sets for any analysis of the microvariation of doubling phenomena in English at this point in time seems inevitable. However, we must be wary of the fact that we may well not be comparing like with like. If that is the case, the outcomes will not be nearly so reliable nor quite so subtle as those obtained via the kind of systematic elicitation methods which underpin *SAND*, for example.

We are at a disadvantage too in that the large electronic public corpora of observational data that we would want to mine for examples of microvariation of these phenomena are just now being built. Thus, prior to the recent and on-going creation of vernacular databases of British Isles' Englishes such as the *Freiburg English Dialect Corpus (FRED)* (see Anderwald & Wagner in press and <http://www.anglistik.uni-freiburg.de/institut/lskortmann/FRED/>); the *Scottish Corpus of Texts and Speech (SCOTS)* (see Anderson *et al.* in press and < http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/>) and the *Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English (NECTE)* (see Allen *et al.* in press and < http://www.ncl.ac.uk/necte/>, researchers were only funded to produce corpora for <u>national</u> varieties of English rather than for <u>regional</u> dialects within one country (Bauer 2004). The publication of Kortmann and Schneider *et al.* (2004) in addition to the creation of *Collect Britain* (<http://www.collectbritain.co.uk/>) and *BBC Voices* (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/voices/>) have systematised and broadened the range of features explored as well as increasing the number of locations in the British Isles surveyed.

However, it is not a given that once these vernacular databases are complete and/or become more widely available, the scarcity of doubling phenomena in general and the fact that the internal and external dynamics of the phenomenon really do need to be explored by effective acceptability judgement tasks will mean that they may never be the best source of data anyway.[4]

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[4] For instance, although I have personally overheard various orders of serial verb clusters myself in Newcastle, North East England, where they are documented by McDonald (1981), the rather extensive electronic *NECTE* corpus that has just been completed under my direction does not contain a single naturalistic example of the phenomenon in any of the interviews which pre-date and post-date McDonald's research.

2.3.2.1 ▣ PREVIOUS SURVEYS AND ACCEPTABILITY JUDGEMENT TASKS

A rather unsophisticated oral elicitation task (illustrated in Figure 1 below) was, in fact, tagged on to the end of the interviews comprising the 1960's portion of the *NECTE* corpus so that some understanding of the dynamics of this phenomenon can be gleaned from informant responses to it.[5]

Figure 1: Excerpt from *NECTE* (1960's phase) interview[6]

1	[INTERVIEWER] eh i'm going to read out this list of words and ehm <pause/> for each one i would just
2	like to know if it's a word you use you know if if you're if you're familiar with it like you know eh
3	they're all sort of local words you know you probably you you you probably know them all you know
4	<vocal desc="laughter"/>
5	[INFORMANT] eh <pause/>
6	[INTERVIEWER] aside for beside <pause/> do you say "it's just aside the fire"
7	[INFORMANT] eh what
8	[INTERVIEWER] do you say "it's just aside the fire"
9	[INFORMANT] aye that's okay eh
10	[INTERVIEWER] how about "you would could do it"
11	[INFORMANT] oh i divn't know nothing about that <pause/> no no no don't use that one eh but i'm
12	not educated man i telt you oh
13	INTERVIEWER] i think it's a local expression actually
14	[INFORMANT] is it

However, as the discussion between Informant and Interviewer of the possibilities for double modal usage in lines 10-14 of this excerpt from *NECTE* demonstrates, the nature of the elicitation task used is itself problematic. As such, the informant's response regarding the availability of serial verb constructions in their dialect is difficult to interpret.

Similar problems arise even with systematic twentieth century atlas-type surveys conducted in the British Isles that incorporate elicitation tasks of various kinds and have a more extensive geographical coverage of the region than Kortmann & Schneider *et al.* (2004). The main Surveys are listed as (i)-(iv) below alongside publications that describe their aims and publish their results (usually in the map formats of traditional dialect atlases):

(i) *Survey of English Dialects (SED -* Orton *et al.* 1962-1971 and Orton *et al.* 1978);
(ii) *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland (LAS -* Mather, Speitel & Leslie 1975-77);
(iii) *Tape-Recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech (TRSHES -* Adams *et al.* 1973, 1976and 1985; Barry 1981);
(iv) *Linguistic Survey of Ireland* (*LSI -* Henry 1958).

A fair idea of the spatial coverage of these surveys can be gleaned from an examination of the measuring points established for each as illustrated in Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 below:

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[5] Unfortunately, a similar task was not undertaken in the 1990's portion of the corpus so that the opportunity of comparing variation in real time has been lost. Indeed, the task was not routinely carried out even in the 1960's collection phase, so that it isn't always possible to conduct systematic apparent time analyses either.
[6] For full details of the coding scheme used here, please visit: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/necte/.

Figure 2: *SED* Measuring Points (Orton 1962:33)
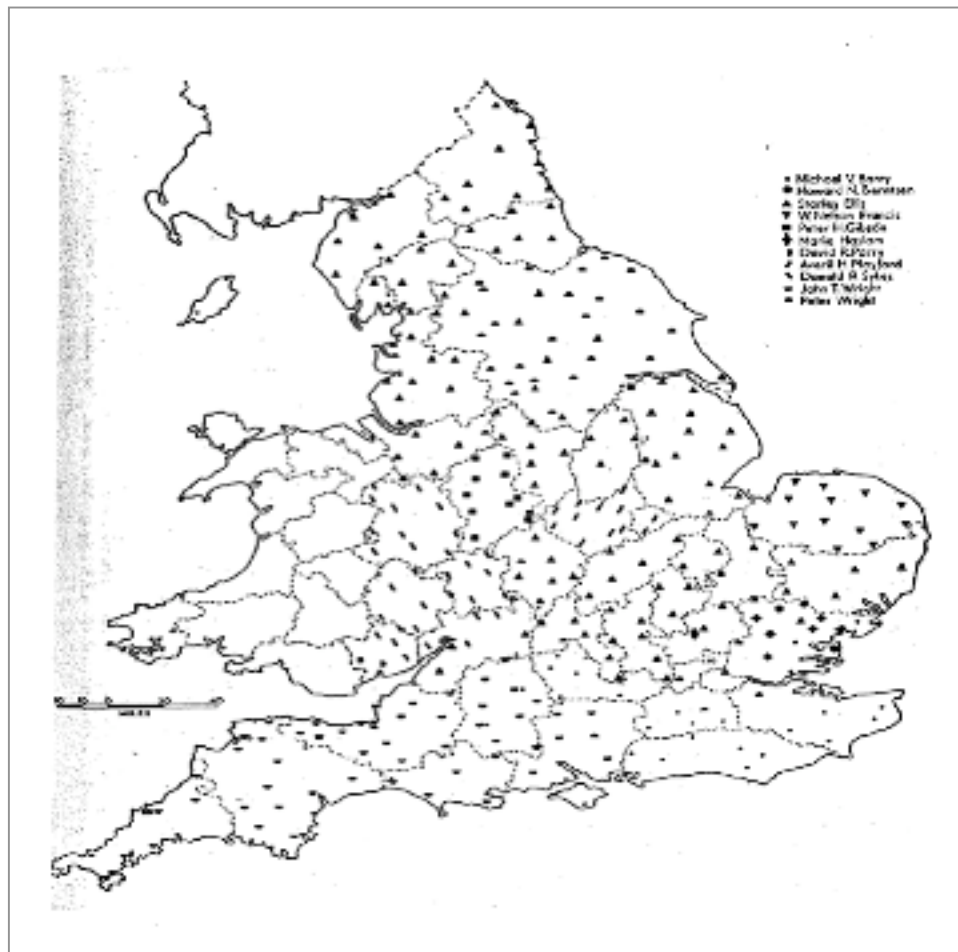
Figure 3: *LAS* Measuring Points (Mather, Speitel & Leslie 1975-1977:216-217)
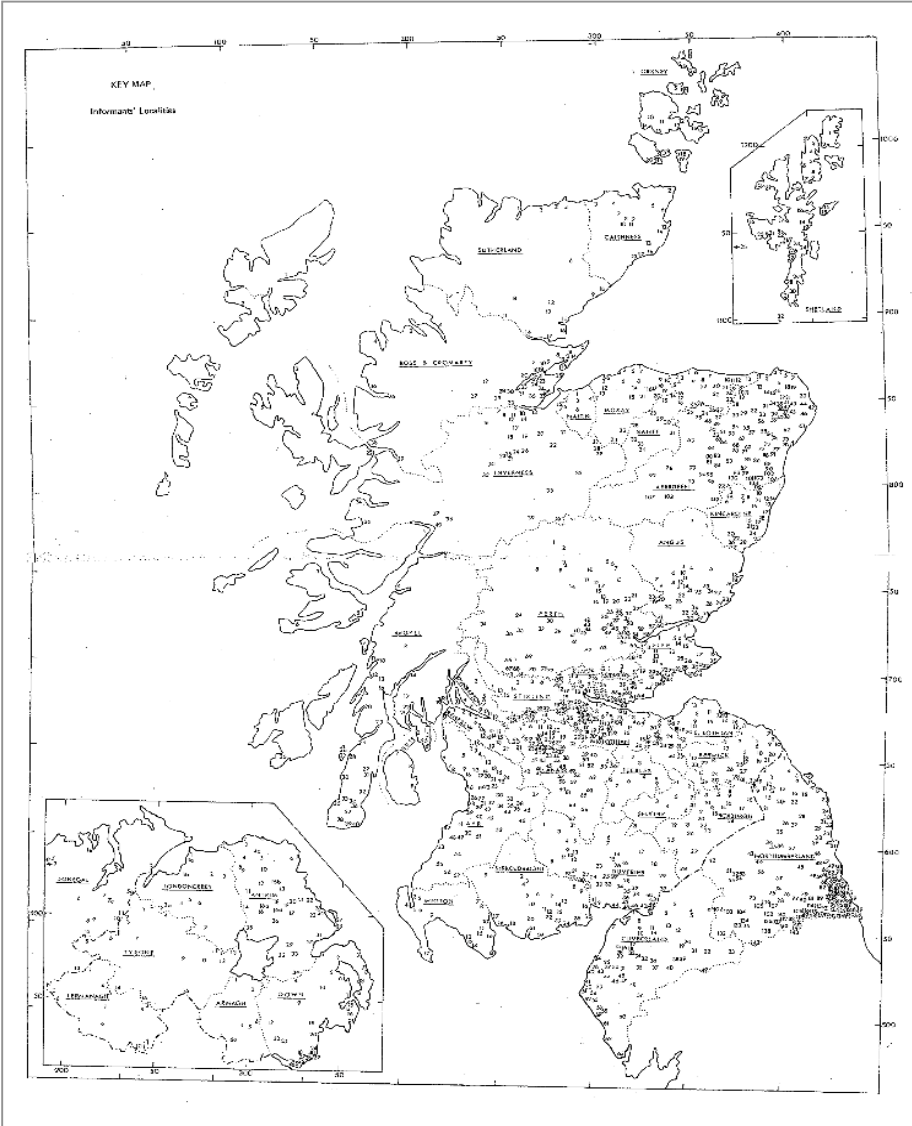
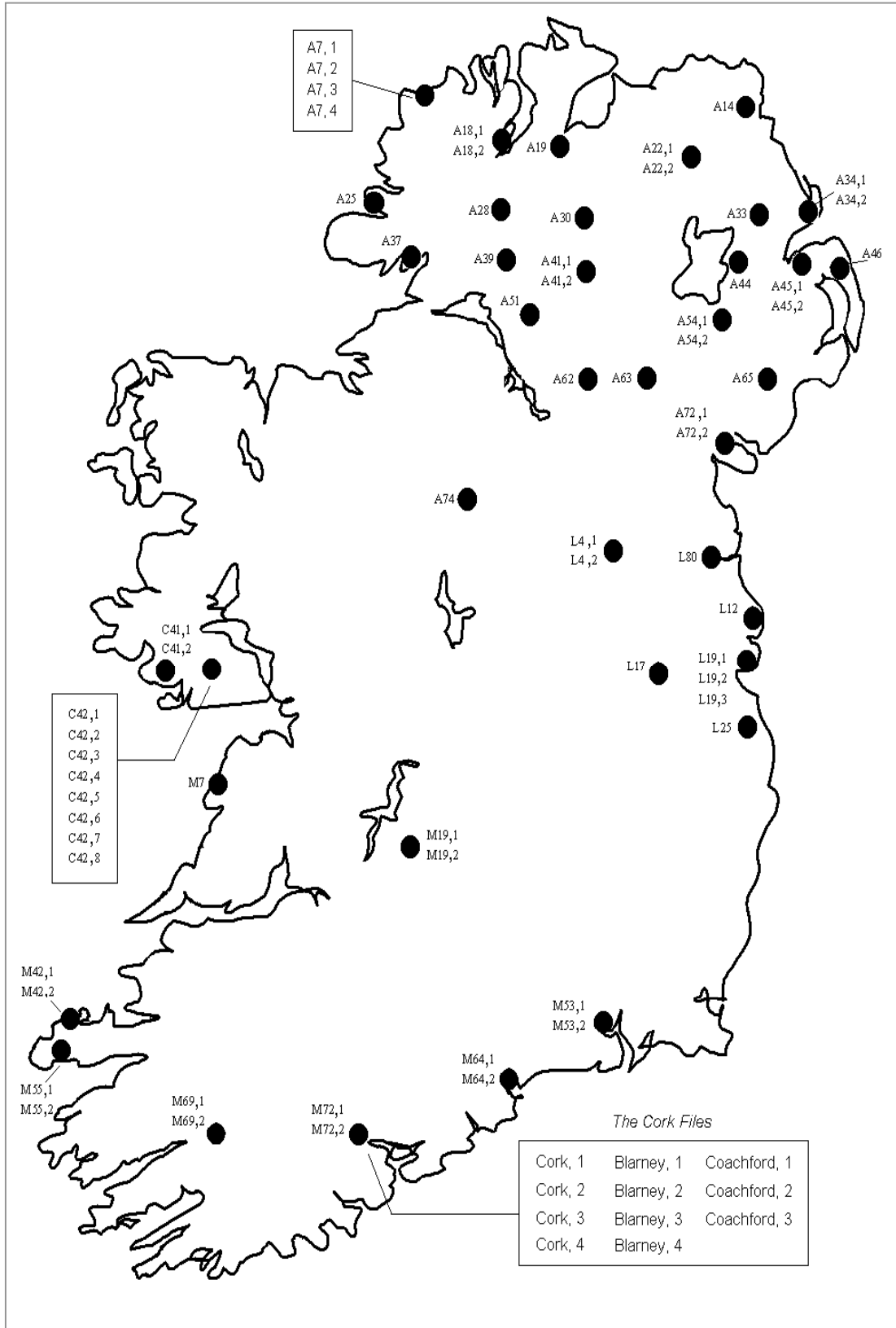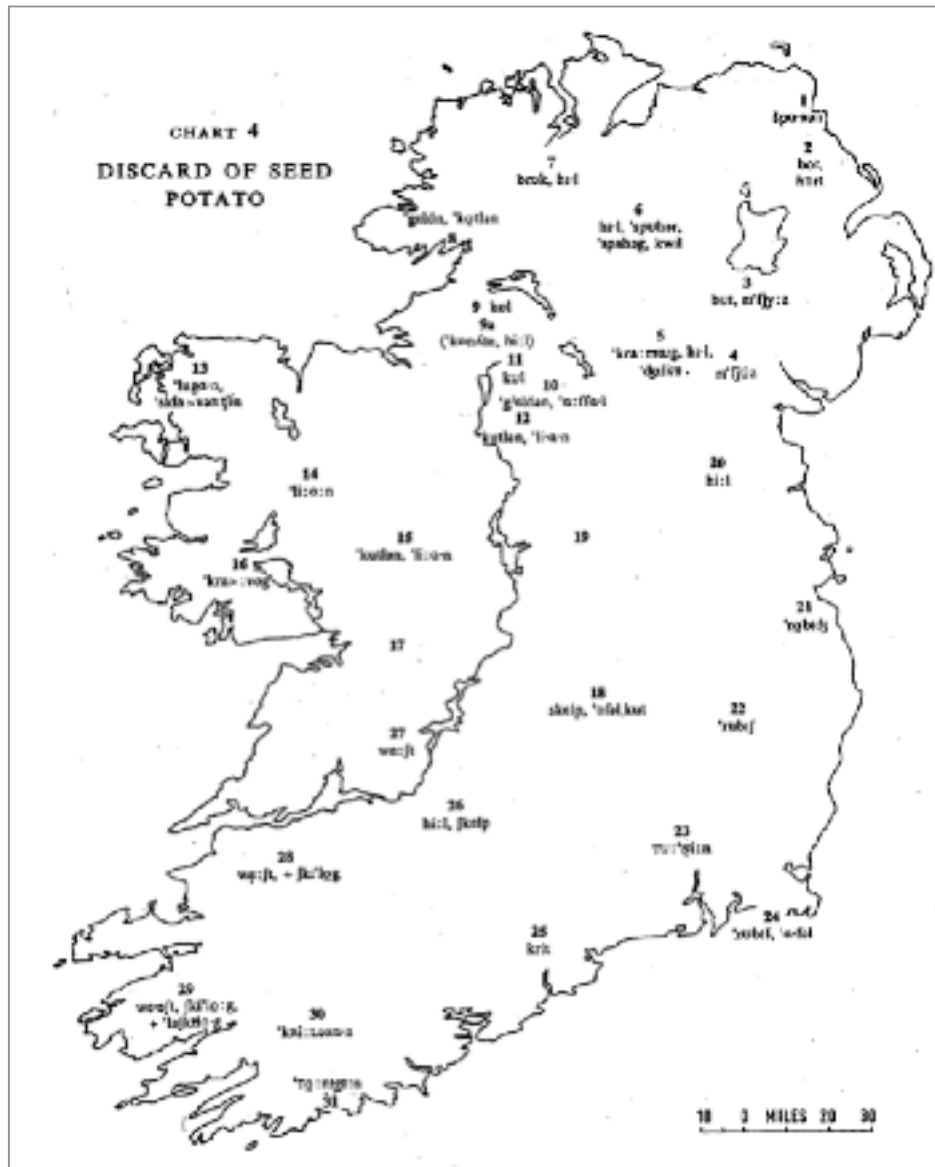**Figure 4**: *TRSHES* Measuring Points (Barry 1981: 27)

Figure 5: *LSI* Measuring Points (Henry 1958:158)

There are two important observations that should be made about these maps: (i) spatial coverage is quite limited in the Irish surveys by comparison to the Scottish and English ones and (ii) all of the Atlases are primarily oriented towards rural locations. Moreover, apart from the *TRSHES*, neither gender nor age as independent variables were systematically factored into the methodologies of the other three. What is more, although the *SED* and *LAS* largely met their original objectives and while areas of Northern Ireland in which Ulster Scots is spoken benefited from their inclusion in the latter, the two Irish surveys did not fare nearly so well. Given the single-minded orientation of the government of the Republic of Ireland during most of the twentieth century towards preserving the Irish language (see Corrigan 2003), financial investment in large-scale atlases during this era went exclusively into mapping the lexis, phonology and morphosyntax of Gaelic rather than English dialects (see Wagner 1958 and Wagner & Ó Baoill 1969). Thus, Henry's (1958) grand scheme for a *Linguistic Survey of*

English in Ireland to include questionnaires on aspects of "Phonology, Accidence and Vocabulary" never got the kind of public funding it would have required. It is not surprising, therefore, that the outputs were confined to reports of vocabulary items in just over 30 locations as demonstrated in Figure 5.

The TRSHES was also only ever partially completed due to lack of funding and it came to an untimely close in the early 1980's. Indeed, from our perspective, the most important fact about both of these surveys (as well as the LAS, which, as has already been mentioned, contains some Northern Irish data) is that they are largely phonetic and lexical in orientation.

While just these levels of the language were also the primary concern of the *SED* (Figure 2), this was the only Atlas type project of the region in which a concerted attempt was made to include morphosyntactic data in the oral questionnaires. The exact division of labour as it was originally conceived is demonstrated in the quote below from Orton (1962:15):

> There are 1322 virtual questions, of which 387 are for phonological, 128 for morphological, and 77 for syntactical purposes, the remaining 730 being mainly concerned with lexicon.

Orton in his Introduction to the Survey divides the kind of questions contained therein into 5 distinct types noting which ones were preferred and for what reason (1962:45). These are summarised in Figure 6 below:

Figure 6 : *SED* Question Types

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(1) Naming Type

What do you call this?

Fieldworkers often pointed to pictures of local flowers, housing types and so on to elicit this type of response.

(2) Completing type

If Jack is not single, he must be____?

(3) Conversion type

In order to get the tenses of irregular verbs, e.g. the *SED* fieldworkers would get the informant to use the particular verb in the present and then, by introducing the temporal adverbs *yesterday, whenever, always* and converting the companion verb appropriately, they hoped to induce the past tense and past participle.

(4) Talking type

What can you make from milk?

This type was eventually eschewed in the final survey design because it produced results too slowly.

(5) Reverse question type

This type sought a variety of meanings for one word: e.g. *what do you mean by 'broth'?*

Figure 7 below shows responses (of the 'completing' type) to the auxiliary section from *Book IX* of the *SED* questionnaire. Such questions potentially could have elicited double modals since the speakers surveyed were from the 6 northern counties of England and the Isle of Man (Orton & Halliday 1963:1030) in which this particular doubling phenomenon is widely attested:

Figure 7:   Responses in Auxiliary Section of Book IX of *SED*.


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           IX.4.14    MIGHT*

      Q.  Smith said to you: It didn't rain yesterday, though you thought it
          would. You said: True, but it very easily . . . . have done.

   Rr.   §COULD, MIGHT, MUD

1 Nb  1 mɛ̈ıt, °~¹    2–3 mɛ̈ıt    4 mɛit, °~¹    5 mɛ̈ıt, °mɛit¹    6–7 mɛ̈ıt    8 maıt
      9 maıt

2 Cu  1–2 mɛit    3 mɒd    4 maıt    5 maıt, °~¹    6 mɛd

3 Du  1 mæıt    2 mɛ̈ıt    3 mᵒi:t    4–6 maıt

4 We  1 maıt    2 kʊd, maıt    3 maıt    4 mɒd

5 La  1–2 maıt    3 mɒd    4 maıt    5 maıt    6 mɒd, °~¹,²    7 s.f. mɒd    8
      maıt    9 mɒd    10 maıt    11 kʊd, mɒt    12 mɛt?    13 maıt    14 mɛt
```

Unfortunately, the questionnaire responses given here for areas like Northumbria ('Nb' in Figure 7) where serial verbs have been recorded by other means actually tell us very little about the potential use of such clusters in Northern Englishes. Instead, the results seem to illustrate a well-known task effect known as the 'repetition effect', i.e. the standard construction was simply copied into the local dialect by the informants (see Cornips & Poletto 2005). Hence, instead of getting the potentially relevant 'might could', phonetic variants of Standard English 'might' predominate.

Although there isn't space here to review all of the pitfalls of the *SED* in this regard, a summary of the kind of issues arising with respect to the ineffective elicitation of morphosyntactic microvariation in this Survey is given in (i)-(iii) below. These are exactly what one might expect on the basis of independent research conducted by Cornips & Poletto (2005) and Schütze (1996) *inter alia*:-

(i)   The fieldworkers were not native speakers of the variety they were collecting and the questions were posed in the standard dialect;

(ii) The impact of prescriptive norms on obtaining truthful judgements;

(iii) Field note-books kept by the interviewers testify to the fact that constructions were often rejected for pragmatic reasons or because lexical items used in the questions were unfamiliar to the informants at certain locations.

3.0 ▣ The Creation Of A Syntactic Atlas of British Isles' Dialects (SABID).

On the basis of the discussion in the previous section, it seems fair to suggest that twentieth century surveys of Great Britain and Ireland are restricted geographically and are largely lexical and phonological in orientation. Moreover, where the collection of morphosyntactic

judgements has been an aim, large Atlas projects like the *SED* have adopted inappropriate strategies to tap into native speaker intuitions.

With a view to rectifying these issues, a group of colleagues at the universities of Newcastle and Lancaster have been much encouraged by the success of both the SAND project and that of ASIS for Northern Italian dialects. As specialists in language typology, sociolinguistics and generative theory, we too want to provide rather more than a simple description of dialect syntax in the British Isles and, therefore, plan to use similar tools and a variety of data collection methods to bring about a fuller understanding of microvariation as an instantiation of the I-language of individual speakers. We are likewise keen to try to tease apart both internal and external variation and, as such, there is a plan to incorporate a novel social dimension in our investigation focusing, in particular, on the impact of age and gender (see Buchstaller and Corrigan 2006). Phase 1 of the *SABID* project, which will focus on Northern England and Lowland Scotland (which are contiguous geographically), has the five main goals noted below:

(i)   Expand, update and re-focus twentieth century traditional dialect atlases, surveys and monographs on the syntax of dialects in the British Isles;

(ii) Participate in a European dialect syntax network that uses similar standards;

(iii) Test different instruments for the effective elicitation of syntactic data;

(iv) Create (via the WWW) a dynamic syntactic atlas of the judgement tasks and telephone interviews as well as a corpus database of the sociolinguistic interviews.

(v)   Advance theoretical knowledge in the areas of generative syntax and variation theory, cognitive-typological linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Since the dialects of Northern England and Lowland Scotland form continua of various sorts, it is impossible at the outset to determine the number of dialects that will become evident across the two regions by the data collection process. As such, in order to determine the number of measuring points necessary to gain a reliable picture of variability at the syntactic level, various criteria will need to be taken into account and these will be discussed in the next sub-section of the paper.

3.1 ▣ SABID Methodology

(i)   MEASURING POINTS:

(a) Measuring points must be evenly distributed for the entire language area and should replicate locations in previous surveys to allow for historical comparison.

(b) Extra locations will need to be added for isolated and transitional zones as well as in other regions in which much variation would be predicted by the existing dialect literature (such as counties in the border area between Scotland and England) (see Gerritsen 1999, Hinskens *et al.* 2000 and Kallen 2000).

(c) Additional measuring points will also be required for larger urban centres, given their population densities and the enhanced possibilities for dialect contact both diachronically and synchronically.

(d) Finally, the selection of measuring points will also be dependent on human and financial resources.

(ii) SPEAKERS: (2 MALES AND 2 FEMALES PER LOCATION FROM 2 EMIC AGE-COHORTS (16-19); (60-70)). CRITERIA FOR THEIR SELECTION INCLUDE:

▣ They speak the dialect of their community natively;

▣ They and their parents were born and raised locally and are ethnically 'White British' according to the criteria established for the 2001 UK Census (see http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/Classifications/ns_ethnic_classification.asp);

▣ They have lived in their community at least until the age of 18 and have lived nowhere else for more than seven years;

▣ They habitually use their local dialect at home and in at least one public domain;

▣ They belong to either a lower working or working class group in accordance with the scheme identified by the year 2001 National Statistics Socio-economic Classification Analytic Classes (see http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/ns_sec/);

▣ They should not have overly negative attitudes to their local variety.

(iii) DATA COLLECTION:

(a) *Development of an Inventory of Morpho-Syntactic Variables.* This data collection phase would review and evaluate existing knowledge from previous dialect surveys which: (i) differentiated dialect zones in Northern England/Lowland Scotland (ii) incorporated findings from previous studies directly connected to dialect syntax.

(b) *Sociolinguistic Interview in Dyadic Pairs.* Tape-recorded interviews during which the fieldworker records social and attitudinal information from the speakers by engaging them in a limited range of conversational topics and then, for the remainder of the interview, remains in the background as much as possible. Speakers are allowed in the second part of the interview to choose their own topics of conversation.

(c) *Oral Interview in which a Written Questionnaire is Administered.* RAs and fieldworkers would train local dialect speakers to administer written questionnaires to others in their immediate locale (incorporating the elicitation techniques that will be demonstrated later).

(d) *Telephone Interview.* Once the sociolinguistic and oral interview phases are complete, follow-up telephone interviews would be conducted to complete data sets from the written questionnaires that were missing or unreliable on account of contrary evidence produced in the dyadic interview, for instance.

(iv) ELICITATION TECHNIQUES:

(a) *Magnitude Estimation.* Sentences are presented using the principles of Cowart (1997) and acceptability judgements are sought, which incorporate magnitude estimation in the manner of Bard *et al.* (1996), Cowart (1997) and Featherston (2005a, b, c). See Appendix 1.

(b) *Direct Grammaticalty Judgements.* Sentences are presented in the local dialect and absolute judgements are asked. (See Cornips & Corrigan 2005b, Cornips & Poletto 2005 and Schütze 1996). See Appendix 2.

(c) *Indirect Grammaticality Judgements.* Sentences are presented in the local dialect and relative judgements are asked. (See Cornips & Corrigan 2005b, Cornips & Poletto 2005 and Schütze 1996). See Appendix 3.

(d) *Compliance Test.* Speakers are asked to 'reconstruct' a stimulus sentence in local dialect – converting interrogatives into declaratives, for example (see Cornips & Corrigan 2005b, Cornips & Poletto 2005 & Greenbaum 1973). See Appendix 4.

(e) *Elicitation Through Pictures.* This method will be particularly useful for extracting naturalistic data regarding certain variables such as reflexive and reciprocal pronouns (see Cornips & Jongenburger 2001). See Appendix 5.

All of these methods have intrinsic advantages and disadvantages and we will be interested to test the extent to which they, for instance (i) increase or decrease normative pressure on speakers; (ii) correlate with the sociolinguistic and telephone interview responses and (iii) encourage respondents to discard sentences solely on the basis of their lexical and/or phonological properties (see Kroch & Small (1978), Labov 1972: 21 and 1996: 78, 100 and Schütze 1996).

4.0 ◻ Conclusion

I hope to have demonstrated in this paper that the dialects of Britain and Ireland exhibit a range of syntactic doubles that appear to have a long history in the language. However, our current state of knowledge about the dynamics of this phenomenon in the British Isles is inhibited in various respects. Of particular concern is: (i) the rarity of their occurrence in accessible large-scale electronic vernacular corpora and naturalistic speech; (ii) the geographical coverage and orientation of previous dialect atlases of Britain and Ireland and (iii) the problematical nature of acceptability judgement tasks used in previous surveys such as the *SED*. It is unsurprising therefore that dialect syntacticians who specialise in British Englishes perceive there to be a pressing need for a new dynamic *Syntactic Atlas of the British Isles* which tests more effective instruments for accessing intuitions about doubling and other complex syntactic phenomena and is based on similar principles to those successfully used in SAND and ASIS, for example.

The Newcastle cohort of the SABID team (Buchstaller, Corrigan and Holmberg) has just been awarded a small grant from the University of Newcastle to pilot the instruments exemplified in Appendices 1-5 below with the assistance of an undergraduate student (Auckle) who is to undertake the fieldwork. We expect our first results to be presented at the *Second Northern Englishes Workshop* at the University of Edinburgh in March 2007 and will be applying for more extensive funding on the basis of this pilot in Spring 2007.

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APPENDIX 1

(a)   Magnitude Estimation.

Here is the reference sentence:
I'm going home and got scolded by my wife.

REMEMBER:

- Use any number you like for the first sentence.
- Judge each sentence in proportion to the reference sentence.
- Use any positive numbers you think appropriate.

Reference sentence: **I'm going home and got scolded by my mom.**	*Your rating:* _____

Now, please rate all sentences below in relation to the sentence above

	Sentence	**Your rating**
1	That's what I hate, is that she's always late.	_____
2	Off the man put his coat on the hanger.	_____
3	I think I want see more of this immediately.	_____
4	He should can buy a two bedroom flat soon.	_____
5	Did you see the large brown cow over there?	_____
6	He's going to the pub with his girlfriend.	_____
7	In libraries it was like you were quiet.	_____
8	I buy not the cheap shoes but the nicer ones.	_____
9	I answered everything, except if the questions were hard.	_____
10	The point I making is is the violence.	_____
11	They didn't go to the beach, is what we know.	_____
12	What she is is smart and attractive.	_____
13	It certainly didn't pan out to be true.	_____
14	I'm not going to eat nothing hot no more.	_____
15	I wish I had my umbrella, is what I wish I had.	_____
16	She has eaten too much of the lemon pie, has Mary.	_____
18	I'm not going to play myself short tonight.	_____

APPENDIX **2**

(b)   Direct Grammaticality Judgements

Would you use the following sentences?:

(1)   Dan and Linda were having a big party. When everyone left, Linda was cleaning up the table. She offered a piece of left-over cake to Dan. Dan - already bursting at the seams - moaned and said "*I do not want to eat nothing no more.*" **YES/ NO**

(2)   We like eating grapes, but berries are our favourites. We often buy strawberries form the farmer's around the corner**.** *We also do eat raspberries*. Sometimes, but not often, we also buy blueberries. **YES/NO**

(3)   Little Ben was always asking funny questions. Once he asked me "*Suppose if we moved to France*, would we also start to like eating frogs?*" **YES/NO**

(4)   Paul and Bob were driving down to York to a wedding. The weather was terrible. It was pouring down rain and foggy as well. They were late as usual so Bob was telling Paul to speed up. Paul refused and said "That's suicidal - *I divven't see nothing* two yards in front of me!" **YES/NO**

(5)   We were driving to Skye for our holidays. The A1 was very busy but, undeterred, my father said "If we drive all through the night, we *would could arrive in the morning.*" **YES/NO**

(c)   Indirect Grammaticality Judgements.

Please rate the following sentences by circling **one option** *from the following scale.*

    1 = People around here use this type of sentence frequently – it's very common.
    2 = I have heard this type of sentence locally but it's not common.
    3 = This type of sentence is not very common in the area but it doesn't seem too odd
    4 = This type of sentence would never be used here - it seems very odd

For example, if you have heard the sentence represented below but it is not very common in your area, you would circle 2 in the scale below.

    Who do you think **that came** *to see George yesterday?*=

    1--------------**2**--------------**3**--------------**4**

Paying particular attention to the words in bold, please rate the following sentences by circling **one option** from the scale.

    (i)   We will play the extracts on the tape.
    (ii)   Please rate the sentences..

(1) Oh no, Ruth didn't just buy a push bike. She had just won the lottery and her old car was falling apart. So, naturally enough, **it was a car** that she bought from the shop.

    1--------------**2**--------------**3**--------------**4**

(2) Our children just started university. We drove them to Durham on Friday. So for the first time in almost 20 years this week-end **we were home alone**.

    1--------------**2**--------------**3**--------------**4**

(3) Tim and Marion had been wanting to buy a new washing machine. They had been comparing prices all over the place. Yesterday, Tim came home and said he'd seen a particularly good offer in Dixon's. He said "Let's go ahead and buy. We **should can** afford that price without having to win the lottery!"

    1--------------**2**--------------**3**--------------**4**

(d)   Compliance Test.

Please look at Sentences 2-5 below. Try to decide on what they mean and then change the statement into a question as we have done for Sentence 1:

SENTENCE 1 - Statement: You never saw nothing

          Question: *Did you never see nothing?*

SENTENCE 2 - Statement: Nobody didn't go to the party

          Question: _____

SENTENCE 3 - Statement: Nobody touched nothing

          Question: _____

SENTENCE 4 - Statement: Anybody didn't drink coffee

          Question: _____

SENTENCE 5- Statement: Any prime minister couldn't stand it

          Question: _____

APPENDIX 5

(e)   Elicitation Through Pictures.

(1)   John's office was undergoing refurbishment and the noise was driving him mad. *He ended up working in the park because he couldn't get no peace nowhere else.*

Does this sentence adequately describe the event in the picture?
    YES/NO

Would you (or any local person) use this kind of sentence?
    YES/NO

Could you give alternatives to the sentence above that describes the situation?

(2)   We're actually pretty particular people. We clean our kitchen at least once a day. We also change the sheets in all the rooms on a weekly basis. *We don't often clean our garage, though but we do do when my mother-in-law comes.*

Does this sentence adequately describe the event in the picture?
    YES/NO

Would you (or any local person) use this kind of sentence?
    YES/NO

Could you give alternatives to the sentence above that describes the situation?